

SCHOOL PARKING AND SAFETY

Date: March 2016

Marton Parish Council's response to HSL Technical Note dated 22nd February 2016 School Parking Survey.

1. BACKGROUND

The Technical Note was presented at the Appeal Hearing for planning application 15/2274M on the 25th February 2016. An e-mail from Paul McDowell CE Highways Strategic Infrastructure to John Thompson HSL Project Director was also circulated, confirming agreement with the conclusions set out in the Survey. (See Appendix 1)

The Technical Note – Introduction 1.3 states “the survey was undertaken at the request of CEC.” This resulted from a meeting asked for by the Parish Council to discuss the safety issues that exist with Marton school parking and to consider the impact the traffic from the proposed housing estate would have on the situation .The meeting was on 28th January 2016, in attendance Louise Whinnett Planning, Paul McDowell Highways, David McGowan, Dick Schwendener Marton Parish Council.

Paul McDowell reported he had visited the site on two occasions and had not witnessed cars parked in the area of the proposed access road and did not see there would be a problem. Marton representatives informed that parking patterns varied according to what school activities take place on any given day, but on numerous occasions cars are parked in and beyond the entrance of the proposed access road.

The Parish Council provided photographic evidence clearly showing cars parked at the location of the proposed access road and the dangers parents and children are subjected to as they make their way down the centre of the narrow lane to school. (see Appendix 2) The Parish Council's highways consultant Progress 10 in the Technical Note June 2015 states in section 4. Highway Safety:

“that due to clear impediment at this junction in terms of visibility and the on-street parking congestion, the applicant should demonstrate that this junction location would be able to operate safely through the provision of a Road Safety Audit”.

It was the Parish Council's understanding that after seeing the photographic evidence Highways would ask the developer to carry-out a Road Safety Audit. This has not happened and what we have is a parking survey, with no mention of the traffic conditions and little reference to the safety problem. (See Appendix 3 RSA)

2. COMMENTS ON SURVEY

The Parish Council takes issue with a number of points in the survey, but what it does clearly show, that on the 2 days of recording, cars am and pm parked in the vicinity of the proposed access road . (Zone 1 and 2)

2.9/2.10 When considering the impact the traffic from the proposed housing estate will have on safety, consideration should not be given to just the number of cars parked . The traffic is not static at school drop-off and pick-up times, vehicles are moving up and down the lane. The cars leaving, after dropping of their children, will be on the wrong side of the road and will meet cars trying to get down the lane. This results in cars having to reverse creating danger to parents and children who are on foot making their way down the centre of the road. Any vehicles leaving the proposed housing estate at school drop-off or pick-up times are only going to make a dangerous situation worse.

3.4 As already stated, car parking and traffic flows cannot be established with just two visits to the site. When parents enter School Lane close to 9.00 am or 3.30 pm they have to make a decision to park in Zone 1 or 2 or chance they may find a parking space closer to the school entrance. This creates the risk that they may have to reverse back down the lane, which occurs frequently. In reality there is not much scope to make more efficient use of the parking space on School Lane.

3.6 It is agreed there will not be any increase in car parking associated with children attending Marton School from the proposed housing estate. What is of concern is the additional traffic leaving the site taking children to secondary schools and other primary schools, together with residents going to work, shopping, etc.

3.7 Parking on the section of School Lane adjacent to the proposed junction is not acceptable. The section from the Manual for Streets quoted:

“Parking in visibility splays in built-up areas is quite common, yet it does not appear to create significant problems in practice”

This quote relates to an urban environment with properly constructed footpaths, not for a narrow country lane with no footpaths: a lane where parents and children have to walk down the centre of the carriageway in live traffic.

Rule 243 of the Highway Code states:

“DO NOT stop or park :

* opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space.”

(See Appendix 4)

Section 2.1 of the Development Control Advice Note 15 issued by The Planning Service

relates to visibility splays and states “Good visibility is essential to enable drivers emerging from the minor road to see and be seen by drivers proceeding along the priority road”. This is clearly not achievable when vehicles are parked within the proposed visibility splay zones 1&2.

3.8 Traffic on School Lane at drop-off and pick-up times are not at a very low level. Progress 10 had many concerns relating to HSL Transport Statement and in particular the data presented for the estimated trip rate for the proposed development site. The data had been taken from suburban housing sites and not rural countryside. Also no allowance appears to have been made for the lack of public transport serving Marton.

3.9 Given the quote from the Manual for Streets is not applicable to a rural location like Marton and Rule 243 of the Highway Code, the access road would potentially displace seven or eight parking spaces for cars. This is a serious loss of parking spaces given that parents are already parking on unsafe verges north of the school's entrance.

3.10/3.11/3.12 The suggestion to use the proposed housing estate as an overflow carpark for the school traffic would not be welcomed by the potential residents of the site, leading to conflict and an increase danger at the junction of School Lane and should not be encouraged.

3. RECORDED EVIDENCE OF SCHOOL PARKING SAFETY ISSUES

During the consultation process for the Marton Neighbourhood Plan the residents were asked to list the things that do not like about living in Marton. The top concern and dislike was parking issues associated with school parking at pick-up and drop-of times.

The responses to the planning applications 15/2274M and 15/5637M nearly all featured concern over the impact the proposed housing estate would have on the school parking problem. (See Appendix 5)

At a meeting between the Parish Council and Marton & District C of E Primary School on February 2014 item 2. it was stated “Both the School and the Parish Council recognise that there is a safety issue for parents ,children and residents” (see Appendix 6).

Councillor Lesley Smethham in an e-mail to Councillor Rachel Bailey (15th May 2013) recognised the problem an stated “I have been at the school at home time and seen carers with children in pushchairs and toddlers walking alongside weaving in and out of parked cars with huge coaches and passing traffic and no footpaths along a narrow country lane. It is most worrying”

Stuart Bateman from CEC Traffic and Road Safety Team following a visit to the school at bell time stated in an e-mail 2nd July 2013 “As the school is placed in a rural setting with narrow lanes, from a highway perspective there is not a great deal we can do. I would suggest the most appropriate course of action would be to create additional parking facilities within the

school grounds”

When the leader of CEC, Michael Jones, attended a Marton Parish Council meeting on the 9th February 2015, on the subject of school parking he said “the answer was not to carry out a risk assessment because there is a danger to school children and therefore action must be taken”.

4. SUMMARY

It has been well documented that there is concern over the safety of children, parents and residents arising from school parking in Marton. The Parish Council recognises this is a problem affecting many schools in Cheshire, but we are not aware of any other school where after parking the parents and the children have to walk down the centre of the road, in live traffic to get to school.

With these severe conditions, to suggest it is acceptable to park on the road in the 10m zones adjacent to the proposed junction in direct contravention of the Highway Code Rule 243 is irresponsible. For Cheshire East Highways to support the conclusion of the HSL School Parking Survey, that cars could park in the 10m zone without having a significant effect on highway safety is beyond comprehension. Line of sight would be affected, not just by the parked cars, but by vehicles exiting the lane on the wrong side of the road and by the parents and the children walking down the centre of the road. If you ask any of the residents of School Lane what it is like trying to leave their driveways at school times, you will be informed that it is difficult, dangerous and on many occasions impossible.

The Parish Council's highways consultant, Progress 10, recommended that a Road Safety Audit should be carried out. We understood following our meeting on the 25 Jan 16 that Cheshire East Highways would request the developer to carry out such an Audit, this has not taken place.

We know due to the lack of suitable parking spaces, parents are forced to park on unsafe verges north of the vicarage. If as a result of the police enforcing Rule 243 of the Highway Code, parents would be stopped from parking in the 10m zone and a further 7/8 vital parking spaces would be lost making a desperate situation worse.

For many reasons, documented elsewhere, the Parish Council and the residents of Marton oppose this planning application. However, for Cheshire East Highways to reach the conclusion that the proposed access junction will not affect safety at school time and is sustainable is seriously misjudging the situation.

The Parish Council urge Cheshire East Council to reconsider this ill-judged decision.

Marton Parish Council

Matthew Symons

From: John Thompson <john.thompson@sktransport.co.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 3:38 PM
To: Matthew Symons
Subject: FW: Appeal 3138078 Land off School Lane in Marton

Hi Matthew,
please see confirmation from Paul McDowell below.
Kind regards,
John

John Thompson
Project Director

We're going to MIPIM 2016. If you would like to see us there please contact us at mipim@sktransport.co.uk



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From: MCDOWELL, Paul [<mailto:Paul.McDowell@cheshireeast.gov.uk>]
Sent: 24 February 2016 12:30
To: John Thompson
Subject: Appeal 3138078 Land off School Lane in Marton

John

Further to our telephone conversation this morning, I can confirm that I agree with the conclusions set out in your Technical Note dated 22nd February 2016.

Regards,

Paul McDowell
Strategic Infrastructure
Cheshire East Highways

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APPENDIX 2

Please see images on the following pages.









“What is a Road Safety Audit?”

Road Safety Audit is a systematic process for checking the road safety implications of highway improvements and new road schemes. The sole objective of the process is to minimise future road accident occurrence and severity once the scheme has been built and the road comes into use.

The auditor needs to take into account all road users, particularly vulnerable users such as pedestrians and pedal cyclists.

With these safety objectives in mind, the auditors need to ask the question "who can be hurt here and in what way?"

Having identified potential road safety problems, the auditor then makes recommendations for improvement. The client proceeds by studying the report, and deciding which recommendations to accept, and therefore to adopt within the scheme design and construction.

The importance of Road Safety Audit

Road Safety Auditing is a specialist process that must be carried out independently of design and construction work. Safety Audits are intended to ensure that operational road safety experience is applied during the design and construction process in order that the number and severity of accidents is kept to a minimum.

Road Safety Audits fulfil a vital role in checking that roads have been designed and built to the highest safety standards. A well carried out Road Safety Audit adds value to a highway scheme at every level. “

From: <http://www.tmsconsultancy.co.uk>



Beta This part of GOV.UK is being rebuilt – find out what this means (<https://www.gov.uk/help/beta>)

The Highway Code

From: **Department for Transport**
Updated: **29 March 2016, see all updates**

Rule 243

DO NOT stop or park:

- near a school entrance
- anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services
- at or near a bus or tram stop or taxi rank
- on the approach to a level crossing/tramway crossing
- opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space
- near the brow of a hill or hump bridge
- opposite a traffic island or (if this would cause an obstruction) another parked vehicle
- where you would force other traffic to enter a tram lane
- where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles
- in front of an entrance to a property
- on a bend
- where you would obstruct cyclists' use of cycle facilities **except** when forced to do so by stationary traffic.

From: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/waiting-and-parking-238-to-252>

Visibility From the Minor Road

- 2.1 Good visibility is essential to enable drivers emerging from the minor road to see and be seen by drivers proceeding along the priority road.

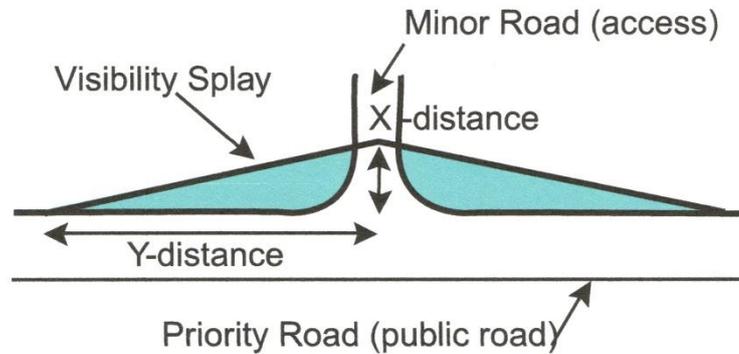


Fig 1: Visibility Splays

Visibility is required over the shaded area shown in Figure 1. The x-distance is measured along the centre-line of the minor road from the edge of the running carriageway of the priority road. The y-distance is measured along the near edge of the running carriageway of the priority road from the centre-line of the minor road. Where the access is on the outside of a bend, an additional area will be necessary to provide splays which are tangential to the road edge as shown in Figure 2.

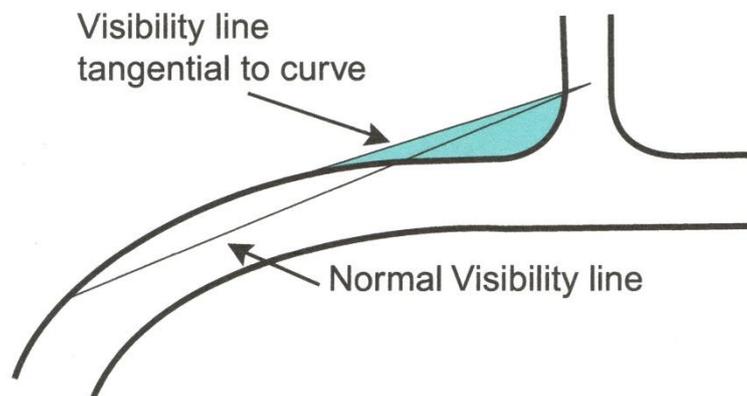


Fig 2: Visibility Splays for Access on Outside of Bend

To: CE - PLANNING APP COMMENTS[Planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk];
Subject: Comment on a Planning Application
Sent: Thur 2/4/2016 11:16:18 AM
From: CENTRE, Call

Timestamp 04/02/2016 11:16:18
Source 10.33.246.200

FORMID Comment On a Planning Application
EmailTo planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailFrom noreply@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailSubject Comment on a Planning Application

Application_details -
Application_reference 15/5637M
Application_site_address Land Off
 SCHOOL LANE
 MARTON

Purpose No Selection
Interest Member of the Public

Comments I am Vicar of Marton and live adjacent to the school, and within easy sight of the field where development is proposed. Each day I see the chaos of school drop off and collection. It is dangerous. My own children have nearly been knocked down. I have seen other children in similar danger, and heard many others talk about this. The school cannot do anything about this. Cheshire East have declined to do so. But still, twice each day, 60 cars fight for space to park on village lanes. Without pavements children walk down the middle of the lane while cars, school buses and agricultural vehicles squeeze past. It is not safe - and I hope it can be made safe before a child is seriously hurt rather than after.

The proposed development would remove at least 6 parking spaces along the lane (road and housing access). And, of course, there would be additional traffic from the new housing.

As Vicar of the parish I do not express any views as to whether planning should or should not be approved. But, if it is I would urge that it comes with a requirement for a solution to the dangerous parking situation. From my calculations I think this would involve additional safe drop off parking for at least 40 cars and three buses - either on or off school grounds.

Proposal make a general observation

Interested_partys_details -

Title Rev
Forename Ian
Surname Arch
Address The Vicarage,
 School Lane,
 Marton,
 SK11 9HD

To: CE - PLANNING APP COMMENTS[Planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk];
Subject: Comment on a Planning Application
Sent: Mon 1/25/2016 10:59:05 PM
From: CENTRE, Call

Timestamp 25/01/2016 22:59:05
Source 10.33.246.200

FORMID Comment On a Planning Application
EmailTo planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailFrom noreply@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailSubject Comment on a Planning Application

Application_details -
Application_reference 15/5637M
Application_site_address Land Off
SCHOOL LANE
MARTON

Purpose No Selection
Interest Member of the Public

Comments My daughters both attend Marton CofE school. The provision for parking near the school is already limited, and parents have little option but to walk their children along the road in the path of traffic. This is already a dangerous situation; to consider adding to this by increasing the number of residences along this narrow stretch of road does not make any kind of logical sense; and, in fact, is verging on ludicrous. I do not believe that School Lane has the capacity to accommodate the proposed plan, and never will, without widening the road and providing a safe pavement for pedestrians. This solution would, of course, have a severe detrimental impact on existing residents, and cannot be considered acceptable.

Access__OptIn yes
Natural_OptIn yes
Proposal Object to the proposal

Interested_partys_details -

Title Mr
Forename John
Surname Goodwin
Address 6 Beechwood Drive
Eaton
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 2NQ

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To: CE - PLANNING APP COMMENTS[Planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk];
Subject: Comment on a Planning Application
Sent: Thur 2/4/2016 10:40:37 AM
From: CENTRE, Call

Timestamp 04/02/2016 10:40:37
Source 10.33.246.200

FORMID Comment On a Planning Application
EmailTo planappcomments@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailFrom noreply@cheshireeast.gov.uk
EmailSubject Comment on a Planning Application

Application_details -
Application_reference 15/5637M
Application_site_address Land Off
SCHOOL LANE
MARTON

Purpose No Selection
Interest MP or Councillor

Comments The proposal is also not sustainable as Marton lacks the infrastructure needed for such a development.

Policies_and_guidance Marton is developing its own Neighbourhood Plan and this type of development is entirely against this plan, where small scale infill & conversions have been identified as better fitting the needs and character of the village. It's approval would make a mockery of the entire neighbourhood plan
A development of this scale would be totally inappropriate for Marton where brown field development is seen as preferable to greenfield development. If this application was approved an attractive field in the middle of the village which has been in constant agricultural use for generations would be lost for ever.

Policies_And_guidance_OptIn yes

Character_Design Marton has identified in its own neighbourhood plan the type of infill development that it requires and this development is not of that type.

Character_Design_OptIn yes

Access A number of Eaton residents have children who attend Marton School and are concerned that the existing traffic problems caused by school parking on a narrow lane without footpaths would only be made worse by the additional traffic generated from such a development. There are serious concerns over child and pedestrian safety.

Access_OptIn yes

Natural This development represents a serious intrusion into the Greenbelt and should not be approved.

Natural_OptIn yes

Proposal Object to the proposal

Interested_partys_details -

Title_if_Other Eaton Parish Council
Forename NA
Surname NA
Address Eaton Parish Council

Appendix 1: Meeting with Marton & District C of E Aided Primary School Feb 2014

Subject: School Parking Meeting 28th February 2014
From: DEREK SCHWENDENER (jananddick.schwendener@btinternet.com)
To: head@marton.cheshire.sch.uk; sue.furness@hotmail.co.uk; gogsbailey@gmail.com;
Cc: marton.clerk@gmail.com; Lesley.Smetham@cheshireeast.gov.uk; jdmcgowan09@googlemail.com; john.rylands@northernventure.co.uk;
Date: Monday, 3 March 2014, 15:04

Hi Sue,

We thought it would be useful to record the main points of our meeting at Marton School on Friday 28 February 2014

Present: Sue Furness - Chair of Governors, Georgina Bailey - Governor,
Nevin Deakin - Headteacher, David McGowan - Marton P.C.
Dick Schwendener - Marton P.C.

1. The Parish Council is concerned at the increase in cars parked around the school and the problem this creates.
2. Both the school and Parish Council recognize that there is a safety issue for the parents, children and residents. Of particular concern is the parking on the verges north of the Vicarage. Also of concern is the parking from the top of School Lane to the school, resulting in parents and children having to walk down the centre of the road.
3. At the meetings with Chris Williams (Cheshire East Transport) at the school in Oct 2013 and with Marton Parish Council in Aug 2013, he expressed the view that the HSE had ruled that schools do have responsibility for problems outside the gates. Neither the school or the Parish Council have been able to verify this position. Following the Parish Council's informal discussion with the HSE, it would seem that if the school has concerns about safety with the parking, it should ask Cheshire East to carry out a risk assessment. The school agreed to contact Cheshire East with this request. Should Cheshire East refuse to undertake the risk assessment or claim it is not their responsibility then either the school or the Parish Council will inform the HSE who will take this up directly with Cheshire East.
4. The school felt a 'Park Stride' scheme was not feasible as all the possible parking sites would require the children to walk along the A34 and as the foot path is very narrow in some places it would be too dangerous.
5. The School and Parish Council confirmed again the only real solution is to create a car park within the school grounds and that we should continue to work together to achieve this objective.

Regards